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1 A bill to be entitled
 2 An act relating to credit for relevant military
 3 service; amending s. 401.27, F.S.,; revising
 4 eligibility for certification; deleting a requirement
 5 that applicants successfully complete a certification
 6 examination within a specified timeframe; amending s.
 7 456.024, F.S.; revising the eligibility criteria for a
 8 military health care practitioner to be issued a
 9 license to practice as a health care practitioner in
 10 this state; authorizing a spouse of an active duty
 11 military member to be licensed as a health care
 12 practitioner in this state if certain criteria are
 13 met; deleting temporary professional licensure for
 14 spouses of active duty members of the Armed Forces of
 15 the United States; creating s. 456.0241, F.S.,
 16 providing for the issuance of a temporary certificate
 17 under certain conditions for certain military health
 18 care practitioners pursuant to a military training
 19 agreement with a nonmilitary health care provider,
 20 which is designed to develop and support medical,
 21 surgical, or other health care treatment opportunities
 22 in a nonmilitary health care provider setting;
 23 providing definitions; providing eligibility
 24 requirements for the issuance of the temporary
 25 certificate; providing for the automatic expiration of
 26 the temporary certificate unless renewed; setting an

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27 application fee; authorizing the department to adopt
 28 rules; creating s. 489.1131, F.S.; requiring the
 29 Department of Business and Professional Regulation to
 30 provide a method by which honorably discharged
 31 veterans may apply for licensure; providing for
 32 extension of credit towards licensing requirements for
 33 substantially similar military experience, training
 34 and education; providing for extension of experience
 35 credits for military service; requiring the Department
 36 of Business and Professional Regulation to annually
 37 report to the Governor and Legislature; amending s.
 38 489.511, F.S.; providing for extension of experience
 39 credits for military service; creating s. 489.5161,
 40 F.S.; requiring the Department of Business and
 41 Professional Regulation to provide a method by which
 42 honorably discharged veterans may apply for licensure;
 43 providing for extension of credit towards licensing
 44 requirements for substantially similar military
 45 training and education; requiring the Department of
 46 Business and Professional Regulation to annually
 47 report to the Governor and Legislature; creating s.
 48 493.61035, F.S.; requiring the Department of
 49 Agriculture and Consumer Services to provide a method
 50 by which honorably discharged veterans may apply for
 51 licensure pursuant to chapter 493, F.S.; providing for
 52 extension of credit towards licensing requirements for

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53 substantially similar military training and education;
 54 requiring identification and notification of overlaps
 55 and gaps between license requirements and the military
 56 training and education received by the applicant;
 57 providing denial assistance; requiring an annual
 58 report to the Governor and Legislature; requiring the
 59 Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles and
 60 the Department of Military Affairs to create a
 61 commercial driver license testing pilot program;
 62 providing an effective date.

64 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

66 Section 1. Subsection (12) of section 401.27, Florida
 67 Statutes, is amended to read:

68 401.27 Personnel; standards and certification.—

69 (12) An applicant for certification as an emergency
 70 medical technician or paramedic who is trained outside the state
 71 or who is militarily trained must provide proof of current
 72 emergency medical technician or paramedic certification or
 73 registration that is nationally recognized and based upon
 74 successful completion of a training program approved by the
 75 department as equivalent to the most recent EMT-Basic or EMT-
 76 Paramedic National Standard Curriculum or the National EMS
 77 Education Standards of the United States Department of
 78 Transportation and hold a current certificate of successful

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79 course completion in cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) or
 80 advanced cardiac life support for emergency medical technicians
 81 or paramedics, respectively, to be eligible for ~~the~~
 82 certification examination. ~~The applicant must successfully~~
 83 ~~complete the certification examination within 2 years after the~~
 84 ~~date of the receipt of his or her application by the department.~~
 85 ~~After 2 years, the applicant must submit a new application, meet~~
 86 ~~all eligibility requirements, and submit all fees to reestablish~~
 87 ~~eligibility to take the certification examination.~~

88 Section 2. Subsections (3) and (4) of section 456.024,
 89 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

90 456.024 Members of Armed Forces in good standing with
 91 administrative boards or the department; spouses; licensure.—

92 (3) (a) A person is eligible for licensure as a health care
 93 practitioner in this state if he or she:

94 1. who Serves or has served as a health care practitioner
 95 in the United States Armed Forces, ~~the~~ United States Reserve
 96 Forces, or the National Guard;

97 2. ~~or a person who~~ Serves or has served on active duty
 98 with the United States Armed Forces as a health care
 99 practitioner in the United States Public Health Service; ~~or~~

100 3. Is a health care practitioner in another state, the
 101 District of Columbia, or a possession or territory of the United
 102 States and is the spouse of a person who serves on active duty
 103 with the United States Armed Forces ~~is eligible for licensure in~~
 104 this state.

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105
 106 The department shall develop an application form, and each
 107 board, or the department if there is no board, shall waive the
 108 application fee, licensure fee, and unlicensed activity fee for
 109 such applicants. For purposes of this subsection, "health care
 110 practitioner" means a health care practitioner as defined in s.
 111 456.001 and a person licensed under part III of chapter 401 or
 112 part IV of chapter 468.

113 (b)~~(a)~~ The board, or department if there is no board,
 114 shall issue a license to practice in this state to a person who:

- 115 1. Submits a complete application.
 116 2. If a member of the military, submits proof that he or
 117 she has received ~~Receives~~ an honorable discharge within 6 months
 118 before, or will receive an honorable discharge within 6 months
 119 after, the date of submission of the application.

120 3.a. Holds an active, unencumbered license issued by
 121 another state, the District of Columbia, or a possession or
 122 territory of the United States and who has not had disciplinary
 123 action taken against him or her in the 5 years preceding the
 124 date of submission of the application;

125 b. Is a military health care practitioner in a profession
 126 for which licensure in a state or jurisdiction is not required
 127 to practice in the United States Armed Forces, if the applicant
 128 submits to the department evidence of military training or
 129 experience substantially equivalent to the requirements for
 130 licensure in this state in that profession and evidence that the

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131 applicant has obtained a passing score on the appropriate
 132 examination of a national or regional standards organization if
 133 required for licensure in this state; or

134 c. Is the spouse of a person serving on active duty in the
 135 United States Armed Forces and is a health care practitioner in
 136 a profession for which licensure in another state or
 137 jurisdiction may not be required, if the applicant submits to
 138 the department evidence of training or experience substantially
 139 equivalent to the requirements for licensure in this state in
 140 that profession and evidence that the applicant has obtained a
 141 passing score on the appropriate examination of a national or
 142 regional standards organization if required for licensure in
 143 this state.

144 4. Attests that he or she is not, at the time of
 145 submission, the subject of a disciplinary proceeding in a
 146 jurisdiction in which he or she holds a license or by the United
 147 States Department of Defense for reasons related to the practice
 148 of the profession for which he or she is applying.

149 5. Actively practiced the profession for which he or she
 150 is applying for the 3 years preceding the date of submission of
 151 the application.

152 6. Submits a set of fingerprints for a background
 153 screening pursuant to s. 456.0135, if required for the
 154 profession for which he or she is applying.

155
 156 The department shall verify information submitted by the

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157 applicant under this subsection using the National Practitioner
 158 Data Bank.

159 (c)~~(b)~~ Each applicant who meets the requirements of this
 160 subsection shall be licensed with all rights and
 161 responsibilities as defined by law. The applicable board, or
 162 department if there is no board, may deny an application if the
 163 applicant has been convicted of or pled guilty or nolo
 164 contendere to, regardless of adjudication, any felony or
 165 misdemeanor related to the practice of a health care profession
 166 regulated by this state.

167 (d)~~(e)~~ An applicant for initial licensure under this
 168 subsection must submit the information required by ss.
 169 456.039(1) and 456.0391(1) no later than 1 year after the
 170 license is issued.

171 ~~(4) (a) The board, or the department if there is no board,
 172 may issue a temporary professional license to the spouse of an
 173 active duty member of the Armed Forces of the United States who
 174 submits to the department:~~

175 ~~1. A completed application upon a form prepared and
 176 furnished by the department in accordance with the board's
 177 rules;~~

178 ~~2. The required application fee;~~

179 ~~3. Proof that the applicant is married to a member of the
 180 Armed Forces of the United States who is on active duty;~~

181 ~~4. Proof that the applicant holds a valid license for the
 182 profession issued by another state, the District of Columbia, or~~

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183 ~~a possession or territory of the United States, and is not the~~
 184 ~~subject of any disciplinary proceeding in any jurisdiction in~~
 185 ~~which the applicant holds a license to practice a profession~~
 186 ~~regulated by this chapter;~~

187 ~~5. Proof that the applicant's spouse is assigned to a duty~~
 188 ~~station in this state pursuant to the member's official active~~
 189 ~~duty military orders; and~~

190 ~~6. Proof that the applicant would otherwise be entitled to~~
 191 ~~full licensure under the appropriate practice act, and is~~
 192 ~~eligible to take the respective licensure examination as~~
 193 ~~required in Florida.~~

194 ~~(b) The applicant must also submit to the Department of~~
 195 ~~Law Enforcement a complete set of fingerprints. The Department~~
 196 ~~of Law Enforcement shall conduct a statewide criminal history~~
 197 ~~check and forward the fingerprints to the Federal Bureau of~~
 198 ~~Investigation for a national criminal history check.~~

199 ~~(c) Each board, or the department if there is no board,~~
 200 ~~shall review the results of the state and federal criminal~~
 201 ~~history checks according to the level 2 screening standards in~~
 202 ~~s. 435.04 when granting an exemption and when granting or~~
 203 ~~denying the temporary license.~~

204 ~~(d) The applicant shall pay the cost of fingerprint~~
 205 ~~processing. If the fingerprints are submitted through an~~
 206 ~~authorized agency or vendor, the agency or vendor shall collect~~
 207 ~~the required processing fees and remit the fees to the~~
 208 ~~Department of Law Enforcement.~~

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209 ~~(e) The department shall set an application fee, which may~~
 210 ~~not exceed the cost of issuing the license.~~

211 ~~(f) A temporary license expires 12 months after the date~~
 212 ~~of issuance and is not renewable.~~

213 ~~(g) An applicant for a temporary license under this~~
 214 ~~subsection is subject to the requirements under s. 456.013(3) (a)~~
 215 ~~and (c).~~

216 ~~(h) An applicant shall be deemed ineligible for a~~
 217 ~~temporary license pursuant to this section if the applicant:~~

218 ~~1. Has been convicted of or pled nolo contendere to,~~
 219 ~~regardless of adjudication, any felony or misdemeanor related to~~
 220 ~~the practice of a health care profession;~~

221 ~~2. Has had a health care provider license revoked or~~
 222 ~~suspended from another of the United States, the District of~~
 223 ~~Columbia, or a United States territory;~~

224 ~~3. Has been reported to the National Practitioner Data~~
 225 ~~Bank, unless the applicant has successfully appealed to have his~~
 226 ~~or her name removed from the data bank; or~~

227 ~~4. Has previously failed the Florida examination required~~
 228 ~~to receive a license to practice the profession for which the~~
 229 ~~applicant is seeking a license.~~

230 ~~(i) The board, or department if there is no board, may~~
 231 ~~revoke a temporary license upon finding that the individual~~
 232 ~~violated the profession's governing practice act.~~

233 ~~(j) An applicant who is issued a temporary professional~~
 234 ~~license to practice as a dentist pursuant to this section must~~

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235 ~~practice under the indirect supervision, as defined in s.~~
 236 ~~466.003, of a dentist licensed pursuant to chapter 466.~~

237 Section 3. Section 456.0241, Florida Statutes, is created
 238 to read:

239 456.0241 Temporary certificate for active duty military
 240 health care practitioners.-

241 (1) As used in this section, the term:

242 (a) "Military health care practitioner" means:

243 1. A person practicing as a health care practitioner as
 244 defined in s. 456.001, as a person licensed under part III of
 245 chapter 401, or as a person licensed under part IV of chapter
 246 468, who is serving on active duty in the United States Armed
 247 Forces, United States Reserve Forces, or National Guard; or

248 2. A person who is serving on active duty in the United
 249 States Armed Forces and serving in the United States Public
 250 Health Service.

251 (b) "Military platform" means a military training
 252 agreement with a nonmilitary health care provider which is
 253 designed to develop and support medical, surgical, or other
 254 health care treatment opportunities in the nonmilitary health
 255 care provider setting to allow a military health care
 256 practitioner to develop and maintain the technical proficiency
 257 necessary to meet the present and future health care needs of
 258 the United States Armed Forces. Such agreements may include
 259 Training Affiliation Agreements and External Resourcing Sharing
 260 Agreements.

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261 (2) The department may issue a temporary certificate to an
 262 active duty military health care practitioner to practice in a
 263 regulated profession if the applicant:

264 (a) Submits proof that he or she will be practicing
 265 pursuant to a military platform.

266 (b) Submits a complete application and a nonrefundable
 267 application fee.

268 (c) Holds a valid and unencumbered license to practice as
 269 a health care professional in another state, the District of
 270 Columbia, or a possession or territory of the United States or
 271 is a military health care practitioner in a profession for which
 272 licensure in a state or jurisdiction is not required for
 273 practice in the United States Armed Forces and who provides
 274 evidence of military training and experience substantially
 275 equivalent to the requirements for licensure in this state in
 276 that profession.

277 (d) Attests that he or she is not, at the time of
 278 submission, the subject of a disciplinary proceeding in a
 279 jurisdiction in which he or she holds a license, or by the
 280 United States Department of Defense, for reasons related to the
 281 practice of the profession for which he or she is applying.

282 (e) Has been determined to be competent in the profession
 283 for which he or she is applying.

284 (f) Submits a set of fingerprints for a background
 285 screening pursuant to s. 456.0135 if required for the profession
 286 for which he or she is applying.

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The department shall verify information submitted by the applicant under this subsection using the National Practitioner Data Bank.

(3) A temporary certificate issued under this section expires 6 months after issuance but may be renewed upon proof of continuing orders in this state and evidence that the military health care practitioner continues to be a military platform participant.

(4) A military health care practitioner applying under this section is exempt from ss. 456.039-456.046. All other provisions of this chapter apply.

(5) An applicant for a temporary certificate under this section is deemed ineligible if the applicant:

(a) Has been convicted of, or pled guilty or nolo contendere to, regardless of adjudication, any felony or misdemeanor related to the practice of a health care profession;

(b) Has had a health care provider license revoked or suspended in another state, the District of Columbia, or a possession or territory of the United States;

(c) Has failed the Florida examination required to receive a license to practice the profession for which he or she is applying; or

(d) Is under investigation in another jurisdiction for an act that would constitute a violation of the applicable licensing chapter or this chapter until the investigation is

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313 complete and all charges against the applicant are disposed of
 314 by dismissal, nolle prosequi, or acquittal.

315 (6) The department shall, by rule, set an application fee
 316 not to exceed \$50 and a renewal fee not to exceed \$50.

317 (7) Application shall be made on a form prescribed and
 318 furnished by the department.

319 (8) The department shall adopt rules to implement this
 320 section.

321 Section 4. Section 489.1131, Florida Statutes, is created
 322 to read:

323 489.1131 Credit for relevant military training and
 324 education.-

325 (1) The department shall provide a method by which
 326 honorably discharged veterans may apply for licensure. The
 327 method must include a veteran specific application and provide:

328 (a) Extension of credit to the fullest extent possible
 329 towards the requirements for licensure for military experience,
 330 training, or education received and completed during service in
 331 the Armed Forces of the United States if the experience,
 332 training, or education is substantially similar to the
 333 experience, training, or education required for licensure.

334 (b) Up to three years of active duty service in the Armed
 335 Forces of the United States, regardless of duty or training,
 336 shall be accepted to meet the experience requirements of s.
 337 489.111(2)(c). A minimum of one additional year of active
 338 experience as a foreman in the trade, either civilian or

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339 military, is required to fulfill the experience requirement
 340 pursuant to s. 489.111(2)(c).

341
 342 The board may adopt rules pursuant to s. 120.536(1) and s.
 343 120.54 to implement the provisions of this subsection.

344 (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, beginning
 345 October 1, 2017, and annually thereafter, in conjunction with
 346 the board, the department is directed to prepare and submit a
 347 report titled Construction and Electrical Contracting Veteran
 348 Applicant Statistics to the President of the Senate, the Speaker
 349 of the House of Representatives, and the Governor. The report
 350 must include statistics and information relating to this section
 351 and s. 489.5161 which detail:

352 (a) The number of applicants who identified themselves as
 353 veterans;

354 (b) The number of veterans whose application for a license
 355 was approved;

356 (c) The number of veterans whose application for a license
 357 was denied, including the reasons for denial;

358 (d) Data on the application processing times for veterans;

359 (e) Recommendations on ways to improve the department's
 360 ability to meet the needs of veterans which would effectively
 361 address the challenges that veterans face when separating from
 362 military service and seeking a license regulated by the
 363 department pursuant to chapter 489, part I.

364 Section 5. Paragraph (b) of subsection (1) of section

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365 489.511, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

366 489.511 Certification; application; examinations;
367 endorsement.—

368 (1)

369 (b) Any person desiring to be certified as a contractor
370 shall apply to the department in writing and must meet the
371 following criteria:

372 1. Be of good moral character;

373 2. Pass the certification examination, achieving a passing
374 grade as established by board rule; and

375 3. Meet eligibility requirements according to one of the
376 following criteria:

377 a. Has, within the 6 years immediately preceding the
378 filing of the application, at least 3 years' proven management
379 experience in the trade or education equivalent thereto, or a
380 combination thereof, but not more than one-half of such
381 experience may be educational equivalent;

382 b. Has, within the 8 years immediately preceding the
383 filing of the application, at least 4 years' experience as a
384 supervisor or contractor in the trade for which he or she is
385 making application or at least 4 years of experience as a
386 supervisor in electrical or alarm system work with the Armed
387 Forces;

388 c. Has, within the 12 years immediately preceding the
389 filing of the application, at least 6 years of comprehensive
390 training, technical education, or supervisory experience

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391 associated with an electrical or alarm system contracting
 392 business, or at least 6 years of technical experience,
 393 education, or training in electrical or alarm system work with
 394 the Armed Forces or a governmental entity;

395 d. Has, within the 12 years immediately preceding the
 396 filing of the application, been licensed for 3 years as a
 397 professional engineer who is qualified by education, training,
 398 or experience to practice electrical engineering; or

399 e. Has any combination of qualifications under sub-
 400 subparagraphs a.-c. totaling 6 years of experience.

401 Section 6. Section 489.5161, Florida Statutes, is created
 402 to read:

403 489.5161 Credit for relevant military training and
 404 education.-

405 (1) The department shall provide a method by which
 406 honorably discharged veterans may apply for licensure. The
 407 method must include a veteran specific application and provide:

408 (a) Extension of credit to the fullest extent possible
 409 towards the requirements for licensure for military experience,
 410 training, or education received and completed during service in
 411 the Armed Forces of the United States if the experience,
 412 training, or education is substantially similar to the
 413 experience, training, or education required for licensure.

414
 415 The board may adopt rules pursuant to s. 120.536(1) and s.
 416 120.54 to implement the provisions of this subsection.

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417 (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, beginning
 418 October 1, 2017, and annually thereafter, in conjunction with
 419 the board, the department is directed to prepare and submit a
 420 report titled Construction and Electrical Contracting Veteran
 421 Applicant Statistics to the President of the Senate, the Speaker
 422 of the House of Representatives, and the Governor. The report
 423 must include statistics and information relating to this section
 424 and s. 489.5161 which detail:

425 (a) The number of applicants who identified themselves as
 426 veterans;

427 (b) The number of veterans whose application for a license
 428 was approved;

429 (c) The number of veterans whose application for a license
 430 was denied, including the reasons for denial;

431 (d) Data on the application processing times for veterans;

432 (e) Recommendations on ways to improve the department's
 433 ability to meet the needs of veterans which would effectively
 434 address the challenges that veterans face when separating from
 435 military service and seeking a license regulated by the
 436 department pursuant to chapter 489, part II.

437 Section 7. Section 493.61035, Florida Statutes, is created
 438 to read:

439 493.61035 Credit for relevant military training and
 440 education.—

441 (1) The department shall provide a method by which
 442 honorably discharged veterans may apply for licensure. The

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443 method shall include:

444 (a) Extension of credit to the fullest extent possible
 445 towards the requirements for licensure for military training or
 446 education received and completed during service in the Armed
 447 Forces of the United States if the training or education is
 448 substantially similar to the training or education required for
 449 licensure.

450 (b) Identification of overlaps and gaps between the
 451 requirements for licensure and the military training and
 452 education received and completed by the veteran applicants, and
 453 subsequent notification to the applicant of the overlaps and
 454 gaps.

455 (c) Assistance in identifying programs that offer training
 456 and education needed to meet the requirements for licensure.

457 (2) Notwithstanding any other provision of law, beginning
 458 October 1, 2017, and annually thereafter, the department is
 459 directed to prepare and submit a report to the President of the
 460 Senate, Speaker of the House of Representatives, and Governor.
 461 In addition to any other information the Legislature may
 462 require, the report shall include statistics and relevant
 463 information detailing:

464 (a) The number of applicants who identified themselves as
 465 veterans;

466 (b) The number of veterans whose applications for a license
 467 were approved;

468 (c) The number of veterans whose applications for a license

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469 were denied, including data on the reasons for denial;
 470 (d) Data on the application processing times for veterans;
 471 (e) Information on the department's efforts to assist
 472 veterans in identifying programs that offer training and
 473 education needed to meet the requirements for licensure;
 474 (f) Information on the department's identification of the
 475 most common overlaps and gaps between the requirements for
 476 licensure and the military training and education received and
 477 completed by the veteran applicants; and
 478 (g) Recommendations on ways to improve the department's
 479 ability to meet the needs of veterans that would effectively
 480 address the challenges that veterans face when separating from
 481 military service and seeking a license for a profession or
 482 occupation regulated by the department pursuant to chapter 493.
 483 Section 8. (1) The Department of Highway Safety and Motor
 484 Vehicles and the Department of Military Affairs shall jointly
 485 conduct a pilot program to provide onsite commercial driver
 486 license testing opportunities to qualified members of the
 487 Florida National Guard pursuant to the Department of Highway
 488 Safety and Motor Vehicles commercial driver license skills test
 489 waiver under s. 322.12. Testing must be held at a Florida
 490 National Guard Armory, an Armed Forces Reserve Center, or the
 491 Camp Blanding Joint Training Center. The pilot program shall be
 492 accomplished using existing funds appropriated to each
 493 department.
 494 (2) By June 30, 2017, the Department of Highway Safety and

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495 Motor Vehicles and the Department of Military Affairs shall
496 jointly submit a report to the President of the Senate and the
497 Speaker of the House of Representatives providing the results of
498 the pilot program.

499 (3) This section is repealed October 1, 2017, and shall
500 not be codified in the Florida Statutes.

501 Section 9. This act shall take effect July 1, 2016.